(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Certain stretches of NH 2 between Agra and Calcutta totaling to 477 Kms. are covered by these projects.

(d) The projects are targeted for completion by December 2003.

Performance of major ports

1057. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have reviewed the performance of each major port;

(b) if so, the ports which are earning dividends since last three years and the ports which are sustaining losses;

(c) the reasons for losses; and

(d) the steps taken to improve the performance of each port?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) As the Port Trusts are not companies, the question of earning dividends does not arise. However, all the Major Port Trusts except Calcutta Port Trust (CPT) have earned operating surplus during the last three years. The reasons for losses in the case of CPT is huge expenditure involved on dredging channel.

(d) Constant efforts are being made by the management of CPT to attract more cargo to the Port and to reduce expenditure, wherever necessary.

Double laning of NH-17

1058. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the total length of the NH-17 in Kerala and how many Kilometres of this length is developed into double lane and four lane;

(b) whether Government have any proposal to convert more length of NH-17 to double lane during the year; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) The total length of NH-17 in Kerala is about 421 Kms. out of which 24 kms. is double lane.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Development including widening of National Highways is a continuous process. Work of widening 16 km. carriageway is in hand. Further widening of 28 km. has been included in the current Annual Plan. In addition, land acquisition for widening in about 18 kms. has also been included in the current plan.

Financial performance of Calcutta Port

1059. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to the newsitem "Calcutta port battles for survival" published in the Times of India dated 24th June, 2000;

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) what steps are proposed to be taken to address the problems of the Calcutta port highlighted in the newsitem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government is seized of the issues raised in the newsitem *viz.* corporatisation of Calcutta Port, constant siltation problem, payment of arrears to the pensioners, separation of Haldia Dock Complex and opposition of the Dock workers to partial mechanisation.

(c) There is no proposal to corporatise the Calcutta Port and, at present there is no proposal to separate Haldia Dock Complex from Calcutta Port Trust. To avoid falling depth due to siltuation of the river leading to Haldia Port, continuous dredging is being carried out by the Dredging Corporation of India. The payment of arrears to pensioners can be made from the surplus funds available with the Calcutta Dock Labour Board. Mechanisation of Port facilities, being a necessity to